Introduction: "Eleven Windows into Post-Pastoral Exploration"

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Abstract

Convened by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures of the Université Libre de Bruxelles and held in Brussels from 14 to 17 May 2008, the "Poetic Ecologies" Conference was the first ecocritical/ecopoetic conference to be ever held in Belgium.[i] *This four-day international gathering, without privileging any bioregion or poetic tradition in particular, aimed to include poetic voices from all over the Anglophone world, from Canada to Australasia. However, in keeping with its title, the "Poetic Ecologies" forum also resolutely sought to place the genre of poetry—from its more conventional to more experimental forms—at the forefront, be it through the voices of poetry scholars or currently active poets. Within the framework of an ecocritical paradigm that is still very much a work in progress, the Conference thus strove to give as much attention to the "poetry/poetics" component as to the "ecological/ecocritical" one in its exploration of the multiple and changing forms of ecological and ecocritical consciousness in English-language verse. In the process, the participants not only repeatedly interrogated the complex concept of ecology as such, exploring what actually constitutes ecologically-engaged poetic practice; besides, they also engaged with the equally complicated issue of "Text as Nature versus Nature as Text" and sought to shed light on the dynamic, shifting—and therefore also ever elusive—interrelationships between ecological texts and textual ecologies, between the systems of Nature and those of Culture.*

Elusive and Fluctuating "Poetic Ecologies"

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international gathering, without privileging any bioregion or poetic tradition in particular, aimed to include poetic voices from all over the Anglophone world, from Canada to Australasia. However, in keeping with its title, the "Poetic Ecologies" forum also resolutely sought to place the genre of poetry—from its more conventional to more experimental forms—at the forefront, be it through the voices of poetry scholars or currently active poets. Within the framework of an ecocritical paradigm that is still very much a work in progress, the Conference thus strove to give as much attention to the "poetry/poetics" component as to the "ecological/ecocritical" one in its exploration of the multiple and changing forms of ecological and ecocritical consciousness in English-language verse. In the process, the participants not only repeatedly interrogated the complex concept of ecology as such, exploring what actually constitutes ecologically-engaged poetic practice; besides, they also engaged with the equally complicated issue of "Text as Nature versus Nature as Text" and sought to shed light on the dynamic, shifting—and therefore also ever elusive—interrelationships between ecological texts and textual ecologies, between the systems of Nature and those of Culture.

In their exploration of the possible forms of interlocking between the world of given materiality and the man-made, the extremely varied approaches to ecopoetic practice showcased at the Conference seemed to suggest that only a *dynamic model* of ecopoetry/poetics could begin to do justice to these terms. Admittedly, to quote the three pivotal characteristics that define ecopoetry for J. Scott Bryson, most of the poetry discussed and performed during "Poetic Ecologies" hinged on humility before the natural world (Bryson 6), displayed an "intense scepticism concerning hyperrationality" (Bryson 6), and developed an "ecocentric perspective that recognizes the interdependent nature of the world" (Bryson 5-6). However, ecocentrism, humility, and distrust of the hyperrational can be modulated across a very broad spectrum. To begin with, different cultures and times produce variable understandings of what an idealized natural world consists of: "Nature" will not exactly evoke the same associations for a First Nations individual as for a nineteenth-century New-England Transcendentalist or an environmental activist in the U.S. today. The expression "ecocentric perspective" is further complicated by the tricky question of the actual position of the human mind in the natural web itself. Moreover, not all ecopoets will start from the same ecological paradigm, nor will they view the question of interdependent relationships in the same way: the labyrinthine and recombinant poetry of a Christopher Dewdney understands the ecological web in terms of a much more process-like, fractured, and "patchy" diversity (Garrard) than the holistic and Deep Ecology of a Gary Snyder does. Nor, if we take the actual making and material texture of poetry into account, will all poems make the reader equally feel and experience the "relationality" and "thought-process that tends toward waxing and ramification" (Collom 7) shared by both ecology and poetry as systems. In the words of Jonathan Skinner, ecopoems may extend from the topologically referential to the kind of "entropological poetics" that "makes entropy, transformation and decay part of the creative work" (Skinner 128).

Moreover, at the level of ethics, if many ecopoets would subscribe to Buell's defining criteria of environmental literature at large—especially the refusal to see the "nonhuman environment […] merely as a framing device" (Buell 7) and the need for engaging with it "as a presence that begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history" (Buell 7)—the degree of "human accountability" (Buell 7) to the environment may nevertheless greatly vary from one writer to another, the link between the poetic and the political being anything but simply linear. If, as Jonathan Bates contends in the wake of Heidegger, "poetry is our way of stepping outside

the frame of the technological, of reawakening the momentary wonder of unconcealment" (Bates 258), to what extent, if any, does dwelling in the world through "presencing not […] representation" (Bates 262), through "a form of being not of mapping" (Bates 262) concretely lead to political change and correct stewardship of the planet?

Ecopoetry/poetics, the Conference suggested, cannot be completely understood without an exploration of the links between *mental* and *physical* ecologies or geographies, be it from the individual or collective perspective. Nor can a reflection on ecopoetry/poetics be completely severed from a reflection on the link between *being* and *doing*, between the *contemplative* and the *political*. And if, admittedly, much of the poetry and poetics discussed at the Conference partook of "a subset of nature poetry that, while adhering to certain conventions of romanticism, also advances beyond that tradition" (Bryson 5), the poets evoked or present on site seemed to do so within a very wide range of (post-)pastoral practice. This range actually extends from the tamest linguistic entities that remain quite remote from the actual organisms found in Nature to the most experimental poetic matrixes and processes that allow natural forms to "contaminate" and seep into them.

Thus, what the "Poetic Ecologies" Conference in its very diversity seemed to point to was that it may not just be "wilderness" that, as one of the privileged subjects of nature writing, needs to be defined along a *dynamic spectrum of interconnected possibilities* (Nash 6), but that a multi-layered spectrum model—which by definition would put "a premium on variations of intensity rather than on absolutes" (Nash 6)—might equally help to better circumscribe "ecopoetry/poetics" as a distinct genre in itself. Ecopoetic practitioners may all cultivate ecocentrism, humility, and distrust of the hyperrational (Bryson 5-6), but as members of a "broad church," they do so, in fact, by occupying a number of flexible, intermediary positions in between opposite poles such as: the naturalistically referential and imagined, non-realist representations of Nature; topological and processual renditions of the non-human other; anthropocentric and biocentric values; "being in" and "acting for" the environment; secular and mystical embraces of Nature; and, last but not least, closed and open poetic forms.

Eleven "Windows" onto the Post-Pastoral Spectrum[iii]

The notion of spectrum also informs the general architecture of this Special Issue and its overall, gradual progression from more concrete to more abstract representations and understandings of Nature. For despite the diversity of poetic styles, cultural traditions, and physical environments illustrated by the eleven contributions selected here, what really holds these together—precisely with the varying degrees of intensity that characterize a spectrum—is their discontent with the many dualisms inherited from the Enlightenment and their consequent participation in the post-pastoral turn as outlined by Terry Gifford. Extending from incipient to full-blown non-duality, ranging from milder post-pastoral positions to radical anti-pastoral procedures, and exemplifying different intensities of fractures and healing, the poetic works discussed here do indeed far more than just select endangered Nature as their theme and "preach" about the need to revere it (Garrard). Without automatically incorporating all of the six facets identified by Gifford as constitutive of "post-pastoral" verse,[iv] most of the poetic discourses under scrutiny here nevertheless refuse to see Nature as voiceless and instead explore a sense of place and identity by querying "both nature as culture and culture as nature," by questioning to what extent "culture [may] empathis[e] nature" (Gifford 162). To a certain

extent too, all of the poetic works examined offer variants of "the recognition of a creative-destructive universe equally in balance in a continuous momentum of birth and death, death and rebirth, growth and decay, ecstasy and dissolution" (Gifford 153). In the process, many of the contributions selected also recognize "that the inner is also the outer, that our inner human nature can be understood in relation to external nature" (Gifford 156). And if not all of the poets discussed unquestionably and uncritically believe in the legitimate possibility of "a deep sense of the immanence in all natural things" leading to eco-mysticism (Gifford 152), most of them nevertheless cultivate an "awe in attention to the natural world" (Gifford 152) in their attempt to allow their consciousness to be partly shaped by the forms of Nature—instead of only and exclusively projecting their own subjectivity upon the latter.

To open these "poetic ecologies" that seek to go beyond the Nature/Culture dualism and the patterns of perception associated with it, Part One, entitled "Elemental Ecopoetics," takes the more concrete particulars of Nature as its starting point and centres on *interlocking landscapes and mindscapes*. The first contribution emanates from Australia and engages with the increasingly pressing issue of water shortage. Hinging upon the scarcity and complexity of the water element, Stephen Harris's article, "'Narratives from Another Creek': Judith Wright and the Poetics of Water in Australia," explores verse that resacralizes the constitutive and life-sustaining liquid forms of Nature. Wright's poetry, Harris argues, begins to heal the rift between humans and Nature by re-anchoring both poet and reader in a "textual organism" shaped by water and capable of *enacting* on the page the non-linear and dynamic meandering of flowing streams. Interestingly, Harris sees no conflict between Wright's Heideggerian style of poetics and her political activism: since, as he puts it, it is "an *imaginative estrangement* from the deep meaning and value of water" that lies at the very root of the current water crisis, a poetry that allows the reader to experience a different mode of being in the world also has its place among the forces fostering the change of consciousness needed to catalyze environmental action.

Shifting from the arid landscapes of Australia to the greener shores of rural Ireland, Juan Ráez Padilla's "Seamus Heaney's *Elemental* Ecopoetics: Earth, Water, Air and Fire" examines the interdependencies between "laboured earth" and "laboured word," between "tilled Nature" and "tilled Culture." Moreover, in a revision of much of the criticism extant on Heaney, this Spanish scholar also highlights how the Irishman re-appropriates the tetrad of the materially constitutive elements inherited from Antiquity in a way that actually defeats binary oppositions. Though Heaney's verse may still seem conventionally pastoral on the surface, it comes in fact much closer than at first meets the eye to what Ráez Padilla calls the dynamic "tensions" and "balances in movement" found in the living organisms of Nature. Admittedly, the dynamization of a landscape abusively reduced to inertness by the dualistic gaze is much more implicit in Heaney than in Wright, whose more radical post-pastoral technique makes this process more directly visible in the very texture of the verse. However, Harris and Ráez Padilla here decode poetic *textscapes* which, though still heavily rooted in the concrete and observable particulars of Nature, nevertheless begin to counter the rigidifying effects that cultural constructions steeped in dualism have had in the West upon both the text of Nature and our mental patterns.

Part Two, "Tree Politics," challenges the Nature/Culture dualism from a different angle: both the contributions in this section foreground the ramifications of natural formations into cultural ones and vice versa by examining how the tree continues to be read in symbolic and archetypal terms for the purpose of either individuation or suppression, whether at the personal or

collective level. In "'I Am not a Tree with My Root in the Soil': Ecofeminist Revisions of Tree Symbolism in Sylvia Plath's Poetry," Lithuanian scholar Irena Ragaišienė shows how the American poet could only affirm herself and her art in the male-dominated literary environment of her time by wilfully subverting would-be naturalistic representations of the tree. In close readings of Plath's dream-like (re)constructions of the natural world, Ragaišienė unmasks the built-in values and order imposed upon both women and Nature by the male gaze and its "naturalization" of culturally imposed hierarchies, the commentaries on Plath by her partner, Ted Hugues, proving no exception to the rule.

The next article takes us from ecofeminist scholarship produced in Lithuania to ecocritical writing about this very region of the world. Moving from the arbour as isolated specimen to the tree as component of a larger natural organism, Claire Jansen's "Poe(trees) of Place: Forest Politics from Lithuania to Tasmania" proceeds from a comparative perspective to unveil how different readings of the forest have contributed to different types of political discourse and national identity formations, past and present. Whereas an imaginative reading of an intact forest that ironically no longer existed allowed Lithuania to resist colonial hegemony, a reductive reading of the forest that negated its ecological complexity and "asphyxiated" it through "silence" helped to legitimize the colonial enterprise in Australia. In turn, a renewed understanding of the Tasmanian forest as an intricate and live ecosystem seems to have emerged in parallel with a much more fluid postcolonial identity in Australia. Whilst Ragaišienė's article had shown how non-naturalistic representations of the tree could help to undo the cultural silence imposed by society upon the individual, the reverse dynamic actually courses through much of Jansen's study, which highlights how the "silencing" of Nature leads to unreal representations of it that end up subjugating both human and non-human collectivities.

Part Three, "Eclipsing the Human Mind," focuses on a different kind of silence, one that is a tool of "attention" instead of "oppression." Indeed, this particular section presents interesting parallels—both intentional and unintentional ones on the part of the poets discussed—with the non-dual logic of Far Eastern spiritualities/philosophies like Taoism and Buddhism, most especially with their decoding—in terms other than pure absence—of what remains of the self once the grasping, analytical mind gets suspended. For this next section is primarily devoted to how the wilful silencing of the human ego and the incessant "chatter" of the forever ratiocinating mind can lead to a healing engagement with the non-human other on its own terms. The "natural" is here conceived of as a simpler, and yet paradoxically also fuller, mode of presence to the real in its suchness and in the moment—a mode of presence to the "-isness" of the world that results from the temporary erasure of the projections of hyperrationality and language onto what lies outside the self.

The first article in Part Three emanates from Poland and exudes the reading empathy of a scholar who is also herself a poet and poetry translator. In "'Pull Down Thy Vanity': Post-Pastoral Subject in Ezra Pound's *Cantos*," Julia Fiedorczuk not only brings important nuances to the debate on "ecofascism," but also ventures onto a still insufficiently explored terrain, namely the role of Nature within Modernism and its avant-garde. Here, she relies on the Lacanian concepts of "*énoncé*" versus "*énonciation*" to show how in his *Cantos*, Ezra Pound moved from an ecofascist—because heavily anthropocentric and dualist—pastoral to a mainly Taoist-inspired "letting go" and non-dualist receptivity to the particulars of Nature in and of themselves. In the process, Fiedorczuk argues, Pound managed to initiate a post-pastoral mode

which, though it still recognizes restorative continuities between the working of the inner and the outer, nevertheless no longer seeks to "naturalize" ethics and assimilate the social order to the one of Nature.

The next contribution, which this time foregrounds Canadian voices, unfolds as an extensive phenomenological "meditation" based on a series of close readings. This article continues to link the question of ethics to the vital silencing of the hyperrational mind and to "embodied" forms of experience and understanding. In "'A Moon Without Metaphors': Memory, Wilderness, and the Nocturnal in the Poetry of Don McKay," Joanna Dawson shows how the work of her fellow Canadian explores the "dematerializing" quality of the nocturnal in order to redefine the notion of "wilderness." For McKay, says Dawson, the nocturnal corresponds to the temporary emergence of a *non-utilitarian* space which dissolves the rigid boundaries between inner and outer and allows the human mind to engage with its non-human other on a different mode than the one of appropriation. In this mode of being, the human mind discovers itself to form part and parcel of the wild, wilderness being precisely all that eludes the grasp and containment of the dualistically analytical intellect.

The contributions in Part Four, "Sacred Spaces," likewise deal with embodied experience and a different sense of implacement as sources of inner healing, but this time the process occurs as much through *reconnection with the past* and a *sacralization of space* as through a different mode of being in the present. To begin with, U.S. scholar Angela Leonard reminds us that poetry may sometimes take other forms than printed words on the material page and that it can be linked to an actual *experiential* process. Indeed, her argument takes us onto the combined terrain of "performative poetics," "poetic ritual," and Afro-American ecologies, areas which still remain too marginalized within ecocriticism in general. In "Goin' to Nature to Reach Double Consciousness: A Du Boisian Methodological Journey to Graves of the Formerly Enslaved," Leonard explores both rituals and landscapes of memory associated with the attempt to heal the inner rift caused by the combined traumas of slavery and identity suppression. She particularly stresses that, as hinted by W. E. Du Bois himself, the process of resolving the inner tension between African ancestry and American experience is one anchored in the very physicality of Nature and the environment. Leonard here discusses this process in relation with the mixed locus of the cemetery, this variant of the garden which also lies "in between" the designs of Nature and those of Culture. As shown by Leonard, within the segregation and (post-)slavery context of the Old South, mental and cultural geographies get superimposed onto the physical geography of the graveyard itself, which functions as a site both affirming and questioning racial identity.

Healing through the sacralization of space and through superimposed inner and outer geographies also informs Rosemarie Rowley's commentary on Patrick Kavanagh's identity quest and mysticism. As the homage of one Irish poet to another—a homage which broaches the complex topic of "urban ecologies"—this biographical piece offers the reader a personal appreciation in a more subjective kind of voice. For Rowley, though heavily anchored in local particulars, Kavanagh's personal journey and aesthetic of "acceptance of physical presence at all times" are bound to strongly resonate with today's world, in which the urban has firmly displaced the rural. Indeed, as a poet uprooted from rural beauty to the stark urban ugliness of Dublin, Kavanagh suffered the trauma of the deprivation of Nature in the city. His answer to the country/city dualism was to stand in-between Romanticism and Modernism and to develop a

"pastoral of the city," a form which whilst still tapping into Ireland's rural past, also redefined the "natural" as not being first and foremost linked to the pristine land, but as being tied, rather, to the suchness of things.

Moving away from eco-mysticism and the aesthetics of immanence, the concluding section, "Poetic Recycling or Beyond Romantic Nature," makes this Special Issue come full circle by reversing the internal dynamic of Part One. For in this final part, the contributors examine forms and adaptations of poetic discourse that, at first sight, not only break with the fusion between the inner and the outer traditionally advocated by Romantic Idealism, but which may also seem far removed from the concrete particulars of Nature altogether. Yet, upon deeper reflection, these poetic forms and variants which debunk both the pastoral and Romantic legacies, nevertheless also remain surprisingly rooted in Nature, understood first and foremost as a *processual matrix* capable of accommodating chaos and randomness, as well as order. What the authors of this section thus explore is not so much the total absence of a fusion with Nature at any level, but rather the possibility of conceiving of more complex types of at-onement between Culture and Nature, once "natural ecologies" are less naïvely decoded as mere surfaces or in terms of the harmoniously integrated systems posited by a now increasingly contested older ecological paradigm (Garrard; Hofer 62-67).

In "The Funny Side of Nature: Humour and the Reclamation of Romantic Unity in the 'Dark Poetry' of Bill Hickx," British scholar and novelist Paul McDonald discusses how some of the conventional aspirations of Romantic Idealist poetry are adapted in contemporary U.S. stand-up comedy. McDonald here unravels for us the comic strategies by which Bill Hickx pushes *ad absurdum* the all-inclusive, equalizing gaze and "cosmic" vision of the Individual that typify poets like Walt Whitman and Allen Ginsberg. Whilst identifying one of the intriguing points of Intersection between comedy and poetry—namely the reliance on the gap in meaning between two concepts to suggest hidden affinity behind surface discrepancy[v]—this article, moreover, also envisions a certain type of postmodern laughter as the only possible site of true reconciliation between Nature and Culture, both primarily construed as "patchy webs" (Garrard) dominated by random reconfiguration and unstable relationality (Hofer 62-67). In a demonstration that thrives on paradox as much as humour, McDonald suggests that if postmodernism has definitely reshelved the Transcendentalist "book of Nature," Emerson's dream of the fusion with the "not-Me" may, however, not be entirely dead and buried but just *recycled*. Indeed, if Nature no longer offers "symbols of spiritual facts" (Emerson 48) but of chaos, then the patterns of postmodern Culture are no longer entirely divorced from Nature. Interestingly too, the kind of postmodern laughter analysed here by McDonald counters anthropocentric arrogance in a way that reconnects postmodern relativism and ethics.

Written by scholars who are also active poets today, the two final contributions precisely focus on the post-pastoral as a process of arbitrary recycling in itself, but one whose randomness does likewise not preclude ethical considerations. In "Recycles: The Eco-Ethical Poetics of Found Text in Contemporary Poetry," British poet Harriet Tarlo covers an extremely rich body of contemporary experimental poetry in both Britain and the United States, once more confirming the need for a re-assessment of the role played by Nature and green ethics in different avant-garde practices. As explained by Tarlo, the compositional technique of "found text" tends by definition to erase the classical inner/outer dualism. Indeed, *by analogy with biological systems*, the "found text" strategies examined here not only approach any textual artefact as an entity *de*

facto functioning within what Tarlo calls a "sea of other textual, material language." Besides automatically implying an interconnection with a broader poetic environment, such strategies also privilege a patchy, web-like concept of collaborative authorship and poetic community. Strikingly too, much of the "found text" poetry presented by Tarlo recycles the mass media discourse about climate change in a move that forces the reader into renewed awareness through defamiliarization.

Fittingly enough, it is a poet's personal meditation that concludes this issue, a musing that likewise hinges on the need for deconditioning. In "Poetry's Evolving Ecology: Towards a Post-Symbol Landscape," American poet Rich Murphy also believes that, by analogy to the systems of Nature, the poetic imagination is "malleable" and "sensitive to its environment." Murphy reflects here upon how the poetic imagination has reacted to an environment of increasing globalization that embraces change as its only constant. Merging the aesthetic, the political, and the ecological, his "iconoclastic" piece transposes the concept of "evolution" from Nature to Culture, more specifically to the shift from a Modernist poetics still in search of new meaning to a Postmodernist language poetry that recycles inherited metaphors and symbols into purely contingent images. In musing upon a poetry that unabashedly foregrounds the constructedness of both its landscapes and textscapes, Murphy insists on the following paradox: on the one hand, this poetics of aporia and purely contingent language undermines essentialist views of and referentiality to the natural world; strangely enough, though, on the other hand, this textual ecology of recycled signifiers also simultaneously brings the reader closer to Nature by, says Murphy, steadily removing layers of cultural symbols and values. And this is why, in his eyes, post-symbol poetry lacks neither relevance nor ethics in today's political and ecological context.

A Post-Pastoral Practice of "Negative Capability"

In their discussion of ecopoetry/poetics occupying a number of intermediate positions on the spectrum leading from duality to non-duality, from mild to radical post-pastoral composition, from fragmentation to healing, the eleven contributions selected here thus bring together scholars and poets from different generations, continents, and sensibilities. As such, they give a representative sample of the rich coverage of ecopoetic practice across boundaries of time, place, and nation as debated by the one hundred or so Conference delegates who brought their expertise and creativity to the "Poetic Ecologies" forum in May 2008. These articles also show the usefulness of a flexible concept like Gifford's post-pastoral, which helps to contribute to the elaboration of a cosmopolitan ecocritical paradigm that can accommodate visions of Nature, wilderness, and the local differing from those prevalent in the U.S. cradle that gave birth to ASLE.

Moreover, in their joint attempt to go beyond the pastoral and erode the certainties of classical dualism, the authors in this Special Issue invite us not just to widen our perception of the "natural," but also of the "poetic" altogether. For it is not only the shifting boundaries of fluid categories like "Nature," "wilderness," and "ecology" which make it at times so difficult to circumscribe "ecopoetry" or "ecopoetics" as a genre, practice, or aesthetics: the ever elusive concept of "poetry" as such further complicates the task too. Discussions of ecopoets often tend to centre more on what they may teach us about the "nature of Nature" and less on how they may help us broaden our understanding of the "nature of Poesy." And yet, many of the

pieces collected here remind us that ecopoetry/ecopoetics may also, in valuable ways, nourish a more profound reflection on the poetic genre and on poetic aesthetics at large.

Indeed, if this Special Issue oscillates between what could loosely be called *more inclusive* and *all-encompassing* views of Nature, the same also applies in part to the various views of the "poetic" implicit in these articles. As highlighted earlier, for certain contributors, everything—from patterns of organization and connection within the real to the human mind and human creative processes—can, to some extent, be seen as "Nature." Similarly, to varying degrees, a number of contributions imply that the commonly accepted dualities between the "prosaic" and the "lyrical," the "ordinary" and the "revelatory" no longer hold, and that the very etymology of the term "poesy" needs to be reconnected with at some point: namely, the poetic should not be entirely divorced from the actual experience of *"making,"* from the *lived process* of defamiliarization through the building of levels of "relationality" and "ramification" (Collom 57) that go much deeper than those evoked by the poem's mere lexical components as such.

Last but not least, the essays collected here have another intriguing point in common, which perhaps shows what ecopoetry—as one facet of a medium endowed with Keats's famed "Negative Capability"—uniquely can do. Whereas ecocritical theory still struggles to develop a synthesis that could elegantly solve the conumdrum of Nature as referent (thus worthy of ethical reverence and protection) versus Nature as construct (thus requiring relativization and constant redefinition) (Hofer 48-55), the poets covered in this Special Issue curiously manage to "square the circle." Even if they do so with varying degrees of faith and confidence, they nevertheless find a personal middle way between both positions and develop their own balance between them. And it is perhaps in this respect, most of all, that ecopoetry/poetics remains "visionary" in an age which, to echo Paul McDonald, no longer considers poetry as the vehicle of "sacred truths" …

Endnotes

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[iii] This is my own playful adaptation of Wendell Berry's "Window Poems" and their variations on the interlocking gazes of Nature and the human.

[iv] For instance, only two contributions incorporate the ecofeminist facet here.

[v] Ginsberg borrowed this technique in which "silence" is actually more expressive than language itself directly from the Japanese haiku. Ginsberg managed to adapt these " […] incarnate gaps in Time & Space through images juxtaposed […]" ("Howl", *Collected Poems* 130) to his own long line and successfully cultivated this elliptical technique throughout his work.

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